



“The Victim is our Priority”



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT Summer 2022

It has been a very trying time during the last few months, as we are trying to avoid Omicron COVID and are working from home.

The ADSSA Board celebrated Asbestos Awareness Week with the help of ASEA and had a small Memorial Day Commemoration over two weeks. On the 19th November Steve Georganas, Matthew Werfel, John Carter and I met at The Jack Watkins Park to start Asbestos Awareness Week. Due to Omicron COVID, on the 26th November just a few of the ADSSA Board and I met at 10.30am for a small Memorial Day service, with the support of the Port Adelaide/Enfield Council. Cr Carol Martin and Cr Barbara Clayton each laid a wreath in memory of the Asbestos victims. Penny, our Social Worker, invited Kelly to talk about her father who passed away with mesothelioma in September. This was very moving for us all.

Next year, the ADSSA Board has agreed that 2022 Memorial Day ceremony on the 25th of November 2022 will be held in the afternoon. Further information and times will be shared later in the year.

Due to Omicron, the 2021 Christmas get-together for the ADSSA Board was cancelled and we are continuing to work from home. Our current office rental area has been put under Health Alert and we need to find a new office elsewhere. I am looking for another venue and hope to find something soon.

I would like to thank the ADSSA Board for their great support as well as all our other supporters who are always there for ADSSA.

Our funding is non-existent so far this year and I am looking at other areas for support. We are hoping this may change later.

Let's all stay safe and hope things settle soon.

Many thanks,

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From the Social Worker

I have been on a very long, glorious break, but always on call for ADSSA. Xmas and New Year seem ancient history to me now. I have noticed Easter eggs and hot cross buns in all the supermarkets!! Dare I say I have bought a pack of hot cross buns!

As my regular clients and readers know, I LOVE SUMMER. I wait all year for it, and it is over in a flash. I froze for 8.5 months in 2021. I have thawed out and would be happy if it was 33 degrees every day. Amazingly, we have not had one day of 40 degrees, thus far. You can tell I am a farmer's daughter from Yorke Peninsula, because I am obsessed with the weather! I 'overdosed' on watching tennis during January, and in between tennis matches would be at my beloved Port Noarlunga beach, devouring books or spending time at our daughter's beach house at Black Point on Yorke Peninsula. It is now time to get back into work mode!!

We did not have our usual Asbestos Memorial Day on Friday 27th November. We were just super cautious and that was vindicated since Omicron was circling. That said, I invited a newly bereaved daughter, Kelly, 'to tell her story', about losing her Dad to mesothelioma in September. Kelly is an absolute trouper and did her Dad proud. Kelly was accompanied by her Aunt, and there were a few members of our Board present, and a councillor from Port Adelaide and Enfield Council, Barbara Clayton, to pay tribute to victims who have had an asbestos related disease and their bereaved relatives.

We weren't even able to have our ADSSA Christmas get-together, because of a COVID scare at the time, but, in the scheme of things, it does not matter.

I have this feeling that we are all still just 'sitting tight', waiting to spring-board back into life as we knew it, but at the same time, also 'holding back'. It is a strange feeling. I guess the

simple word to sum it up is uncertainty. That said, my life has remained largely unchanged, despite Australia in 2021 being characterised by family, financial and social dislocation. How lucky have we been here in SA?!!

I have a policy of listening to the daily news on my beloved ABC local radio station each morning, to get the latest updates about COVID – if you can keep up with the ‘moving feast of rule changes!!- and then tuning back in again for the 7pm ABC news. The news can be very repetitive and end up consuming all your head space.

Research shows that when people are exposed to a moderate amount of adversity in life (accidents, death, illness, divorce) they report higher levels of well-being and are better at dealing with acutely stressful events, compared to those who have TOO much adversity or those who have TOO little.

I met a new 72 yr old female mesothelioma client recently, who used the word “positive” to describe how she was feeling, and how she intended to cope with her diagnosis. She said that one of her sons wanted to go on the ‘mesothelioma journey’ with her. A delightful lady who lives alone, has another child overseas and presented in a very calm, measured manner. She told me how she walks her little dog daily and devours books as part of her daily routine. The simple pleasures in life, are always the best.

I look forward to being around for yet another year (my 17th year!!)- working with my clients, the lawyers, my Board and community providers.

Penny Jacomos, B.A.Soc.Wk.,MA(SS), Social Worker

Please feel free to contact me anytime on my mobile: 0412701630 or email me on: pjacomos@hotmail.com

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